

ended up pardoning every one of these criminal defendants and authorized the payment of millions of dollars in compensation for their damages.

And so when we hear from the Republicans that she is not ready for prime time, she is too radical, she can't handle this job, we are all going to vote against her—and they have—you think to yourself: Did they ever take a minute to read what she has done with her life, time and time again?

I will tell you, it is incredible to me that we are at this moment in history that a woman of color with an extraordinary civil rights record wants to make history in the Department of Justice, wants to continue to serve this Nation, representing our government and prosecuting cases for the American people, that she is prepared to take her experience and expertise and sit down and try to help us solve these monumental challenges we currently face and can't get a single Republican to stand in support—not one. It is hard to imagine.

Well, as I mentioned before, she has tackled tough assignments before successfully in the cause of the name of justice. The Justice Department, her service there, the Tulia case, which many don't want to talk about, has been true throughout her career. She is guided by an unshakable belief in upholding the rule of law and vindicating the rights of those who are too frequently taken advantage of, marginalized, and forgotten.

To Vanita Gupta, the people who have suffered discrimination in this country matter. She has dedicated her life to that. It troubles some. It wrangles them. It makes them angry, but the fact of the matter is, she is an extraordinary, essentially amazing woman in my estimation.

She has demonstrated already what kind of leader she is, what kind of courage she had 6 months out of law school to go to Tulia, TX, and to represent people already serving time in jail, who were ultimately released.

She also has a proven record of bipartisanship, a record of working with law enforcement and community leaders, and a record of upholding the rule of law.

In just a few minutes—3 or 4 minutes—the Senate will get a chance to advance her nomination, and perhaps several hours after that, we will finally give her the vote of confidence she deserves to join the Department of Justice, Merrick Garland, and now Lisa Monaco, who is being sworn in today, and be part of the team that heard the message in Minnesota yesterday and is prepared to move forward to make America a better place for all, a better place for opportunity and equality and real justice.

We need the right people in the Department of Justice at this moment in history more than ever in current memory, and we have the beginnings of that team with our Attorney General and with Lisa Monaco. Vanita Gupta

should join them. She should be able, the day after tomorrow or even sooner, if possible, to be sworn into office and have this opportunity to continue her service to the Department of Justice and the cause of justice. That, to me, is indicated by her background and by the endorsement she has faced.

When you hear the bad comments about her from the other side of the aisle, pause and think for a moment: But, Senator, if she is so bad, why did all of the law enforcement groups in America support her? Why do all the civil rights organizations support her? Why does she have the support of so many conservatives, even in the business community, if she is as bad as you say she is?

The honest answer is she is not. She is a quality individual with remarkable credentials and a remarkable wealth of experience that she wants to continue to bring to our government. I hope the Senate will give her that opportunity. I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican whip.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be able to complete my remarks before the vote.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FOR THE PEOPLE ACT

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, it is another day and another manufactured crisis. Yesterday, I came down to the floor to talk about the supposed crisis of confidence in the Supreme Court that requires us to immediately add four additional Democrat-chosen Justices.

Today, I want to talk about another manufactured crisis, and that is the supposed election crisis that requires us to pass H.R. 1, a Democrat piece of legislation designed to increase Democrats' chances of maintaining their current tenuous hold on power.

H.R. 1 is not new legislation. Democrats introduced a nearly identical version of this bill in the last Congress as well. Back then, we were told that we needed this bill to address profound electoral problems in our democracy—in other words, Democrats didn't like the results of the 2016 elections.

Then, of course, last year, we had an election with record voter turnout—the highest voter turnout since 1900—an election that gave Democrats the Presidency and paper-thin majorities in Congress, and the story changed. Now we are told that we need to pass H.R. 1 and federalize elections because legislatures around the country are passing “voter suppression” laws.

The State of Georgia recently passed an election reform measure—a law that keeps Georgia squarely in the mainstream when it comes to State election laws.

The Speaker of the Georgia House of Representatives noted yesterday in testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee that while Georgia has made its no-excuse absentee voting

more secure with this law, States like Delaware and New York—among many others—don't even allow no-excuse voting.

Delaware, of course, is the home State of the President of the United States. New York is the home State of the Democratic leader. I haven't noticed the President or the Democratic leader criticizing their home States for voter suppression. Nevertheless, Democrats decided that the Georgia measure would serve as a useful rallying cry for H.R. 1, so they spread a web of misinformation and outright lies, attempting to get people worked up by portraying Georgia's fairly ordinary election reform laws as a radical attempt to suppress voters and to suppress votes.

President Biden irresponsibly described the law as “Jim Crow on steroids,” as if the Georgia Legislature had decided to reinstate the evil of segregation. The President has been repeatedly rebuked by none other than the Washington Post for repeating a completely false claim about the Georgia law. In fact, the Washington Post gave the President four Pinocchios—a rating that the Post reserves for “whoppers”—for his false claim that the law is designed to keep working Americans from voting. In fact, as the Post's Fact Checker piece makes clear, there is reason to think the law might actually—wait for it, Mr. President—expand access to early voting.

A fair-minded piece in the New York Times, hardly a newspaper that carries water for Republicans, concluded that the voting provisions of the Georgia law are “unlikely to significantly affect turnout or Democratic chances.” But that hasn't stopped Democrats from using Georgia's law as the poster child for supposed voter suppression and the pressing reason to pass H.R. 1.

Let's talk about the substance of H.R. 1. To start with, this legislation would transfer control over elections from States to the Federal Government despite the fact that the Constitution gives primary control over elections to the States. Under this law, States' ability to develop election systems that address the needs and challenges facing their States would be substantially limited.

Of course, Democrats would like us to believe that this Federal power grab is urgently needed since, they argue, States are contemplating voter suppression laws, but as I pointed out, the last election, with its record turnout—the largest turnout since 1900—did not exactly suggest that States are incapable of setting their own election rules.

Ironically, H.R. 1, which purports to be an election integrity bill, would actually undermine election integrity. The bill takes aim at State voter ID laws—a longtime obsession, I might add, of the Democrats. I have always been at a loss to understand Democrats' passionate opposition to requiring people to provide identification before voting.

Democrats, of course, present voter ID laws as an attempt to suppress votes by forcing people to go through a challenging process of obtaining a government ID. I have to ask if Democrats also think laws requiring ID to drive are somehow discriminatory. We constantly require photo identification in our society to drive, to board planes, to enter many government buildings, to pick up tickets to Major League baseball games. These requirements are pretty universally accepted. It is difficult to understand how requiring identification to vote is so outrageous. The American people don't seem to think so. Polls show that a majority of Americans support voter ID laws.

In addition to effectively eliminating State voter ID requirements, H.R. 1 also requires that States allow ballot harvesting, the controversial practice of allowing political operatives to collect and submit ballots. Needless to say, ballot harvesting opens up a lot of questions about voter fraud and election integrity, but the Democrats' bill would require it.

As I mentioned, Democrats introduced an almost identical version of H.R. 1 in the last Congress, and—get this—the ACLU opposed it. The ACLU opposed it. That is right. The American Civil Liberties Union opposed it. Why? Because the bill would “unconstitutionally burden speech and associational rights.” Unconstitutionally burden speech and associational rights. H.R. 1 would impose a vast new array of restrictions on political speech and issue advocacy, and it would impose disclosure requirements for organizations that would open up donors to retaliation and intimidation.

I could fill up several speeches with a discussion of all the bad provisions in this bill. H.R. 1 would turn the FEC, the Federal Election Commission, into a partisan body. It would require taxpayer funding of political campaigns. Taxpayer dollars would go to fund bumper stickers and political ads. It would allow the IRS to deny tax-exempt status to organizations whose positions it doesn't like and on and on.

Then there is the fact that on a purely practical level, this bill would be a disaster. A recent Daily Beast article highlighted the onerous and impossible-to-meet requirements the bill imposes on conducting elections. To quote the Daily Beast, another media outlet not exactly known for its favoritism toward conservative Republicans, the bill “was written with apparently no consultation with election administrators, and it shows . . . it comes packed with deadlines and requirements election administrators cannot possibly meet without throwing their systems into chaos.”

The article goes on to say:

The sections of the bill relating to voting systems . . . show remarkably little understanding of the problems the authors apply alarmingly prescriptive solutions to. Many of the changes the bill demands of election administrators are literally impossible to implement.

That, again, is from the Daily Beast. Like the Democrats' Supreme Court power grab, H.R. 1 is a solution in search of a problem. Protecting the right to vote and preserving the integrity of our election systems are essential. While we are fortunate that our electoral system by and large seems to be operating well, there are certainly measures that we can take up to further enhance election integrity. H.R. 1 is not one of those measures. This legislation is an unacceptable Federal takeover of elections that would undermine election integrity and substantially curtail First Amendment rights. Every single Member of Congress should be opposing it.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority whip.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call with respect to the Gupta nomination be waived.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 62, Vanita Gupta, of Virginia, to be Associate Attorney General.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Mazie Hirono, Tammy Baldwin, Tammy Duckworth, Alex Padilla, Maria Cantwell, Sheldon Whitehouse, Cory A. Booker, Debbie Stabenow, Brian Schatz, Tim Kaine, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Benjamin L. Cardin, Gary C. Peters, Patrick J. Leahy, Christopher Murphy.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Vanita Gupta, of Virginia, to be Associate Attorney General, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 51, nays 49, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 159 Ex.]

YEAS—51

Baldwin	Hassan	Murphy
Bennet	Heinrich	Murray
Blumenthal	Hickenlooper	Ossoff
Booker	Hirono	Padilla
Brown	Kaine	Peters
Cantwell	Kelly	Reed
Cardin	King	Rosen
Carper	Klobuchar	Sanders
Casey	Leahy	Schatz
Coons	Lujan	Schumer
Cortez Masto	Manchin	Shaheen
Duckworth	Markey	Sinema
Durbin	Menendez	Smith
Feinstein	Merkley	Stabenow
Gillibrand	Murkowski	Tester

Van Hollen
Warner

Warnock
Warren

Whitehouse
Wyden

NAYS—49

Barrasso	Graham	Risch
Blackburn	Grassley	Romney
Blunt	Hagerty	Rounds
Boozman	Hawley	Rubio
Braun	Hoeven	Sasse
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Scott (FL)
Capito	Inhofe	Scott (SC)
Cassidy	Johnson	Shelby
Collins	Kennedy	Sullivan
Cornyn	Lankford	Thune
Cotton	Lee	Tillis
Cramer	Lummis	Toomey
Crapo	Marshall	Tuberville
Cruz	McConnell	Wicker
Daines	Moran	Young
Ernst	Paul	
Fischer	Portman	

(Mr. KELLY assumed the Chair.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HICKENLOOPER). On this vote, we have 51 yeas and 49 nays.

The motion is agreed to.

The Senator from Texas.

NOMINATION OF VANITA GUPTA

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, as my friend the Republican leader likes to remind us, the Senate is not just a legislative body; we are also in the personnel business. One of the Senate's core responsibilities is to provide advice and consent for the President's nominees for a range of important jobs throughout the Federal Government. In fact, it is a constitutional duty of the Senate to perform that function.

When the President is of the opposing party, there is all but a guarantee that you will not see eye to eye with every nominee, but the process isn't just about politics or judging nominees based on whether their opinions align with your own. As I see it, we are charged with evaluating these individuals to see if they are qualified not only to carry out the duties of their position but will also do so with honor and integrity.

Take Attorney General Merrick Garland, for example. When the Senate considered his nomination, it became clear that he had both the experience and the temperament to lead the Department of Justice. Do we agree on everything? No. But he committed to do everything in his power to keep politics out of the Department of Justice, and I have no reason to doubt his credibility.

The same could be said of the President's nominee for Deputy Attorney General, Lisa Monaco, who was confirmed yesterday by the Senate. Ms. Monaco is a longtime public servant who previously served for 15 years at the Department of Justice. Throughout her career, she has earned the respect of folks on both sides of the aisle, and I believe she will bring a wealth of experience and institutional knowledge to the Department.

So my point is, I have supported the majority of President Biden's nominees thus far, and every single nominee has received bipartisan support at some level. But unfortunately, it looks like we are about ready to break that record of bipartisanship.

Today, the Senate will vote on the nomination of Vanita Gupta to serve as